

Message Text

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PAGE 01 FREETO 01556 251648Z

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ACTION EB-07

INFO OCT-01 AF-08 ISO-00 AID-05 CIAE-00 COME-00 FRB-01

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CIEP-02 LAB-04 SIL-01 OMB-01 AGR-10 EUR-12 /086 W

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R 251632Z MAY 76

FM AMEMBASSY FREETOWN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3187

INFO AMEMBASSY MONROVIA

UNCLAS FREETOWN 1556

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EINV

SUBJECT: PALM OIL INVESTMENT

REF: STATE 115216 NOTAL

1. RELIABLE STATISTICS ON INVESTMENT IN PALM OIL PRODUCTION AND PROCESSING IN SIERRA LEONE VERY DIFFICULT TO COME BY. PALM OIL PRODUCTION IS BASICALLY SMALLHOLDER OPERATION UNDERTAKEN ON SMALL SCALE IN HUNDREDS OF VILLAGES. MAJORITY OF PROCESSING IS FOR LOCAL USE AS COOKING OIL AND FOOD SEASONING, USUALLY WITHIN SAME VILLAGE AND NOT EVEN FOR DOMESTIC MARKETING.

2. BEST COMPILATION OF DATA AVAILABLE IN WASHINGTON ON PALM OIL PRODUCTION AND PROCESSING IN SIERRA LEONE IS AGRICULTURAL ATTACHE MONROVIA REPORT SL 6002 DATED APRIL 22, 1976, ON FATS AND OILS, WHICH EMBASSY PRESUMES IS OR CAN BE AVAILABLE TO INTERAGENCY STUDY GROUP. WHILE REPORT DOES NOT GIVE FIGURES ON AMOUNTS OF INVESTMENT, IT GIVES SIGNIFICANT DETAL ON THE TWO OIL PALM PRODUCTION AND PROCESSING PROJECTS NOW UNDER DEVELOPMENT EACH TO CONSIST OF PLANTATION AND OIL MILL. ONE AT DARU, EASTERN PROVINCE, BEING ESTABLISHED IN CONNECTION WITH IDA-FINANCED EASTERN PROVINCE INTEGRATED RURAL DEVELOPMENT
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PAGE 02 FREETO 01556 251648Z

PROJECT. GAMBIA-MATTRU PROJECT IN SOUTHERN PROVINCE BEING LARGELY FINANCED BY AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT BANK.

EXISTING PALM KERNEL OIL MILL AT WELLINGTON NEAR
FREETOWN IS GOVERNMENT OWNED AND OPERATED ON MANAGEMENT
CONTRACT BY BRITISH FIRM. PALM KERNEL OIL MILL
CURRENTLY RUNNING AT LOSS AND AT ONLY HALF CAPACITY.

3. MAIN CONSIDERATIONS KEEP IN MIND WITH REGARD FUTURE
PALM OIL DEVELOPMENT IN SIERRA LEONE ARE THAT PALM OIL
IS IMPORTANT LOCAL STAPLE AND IS ONE OF POTENTIALLY
MOST PROFITABLE UNDERTAKINGS FOR SMALL RURAL FARMERS
IN A COUNTRY WHERE RURAL INCOMES EXTREMELY LOW. UNDER
THESE CIRCUMSTANCES, GOSL LIKELY SEEK INCLUDE FURTHER
PALM OIL DEVELOPMENT IN FUTURE DEVELOPMENT EFFORTS.
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Margaret P. Grafeld
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